

March 2015

Senior Health and Wellness Newsletter

Kentucky Department for Aging and Independent Living



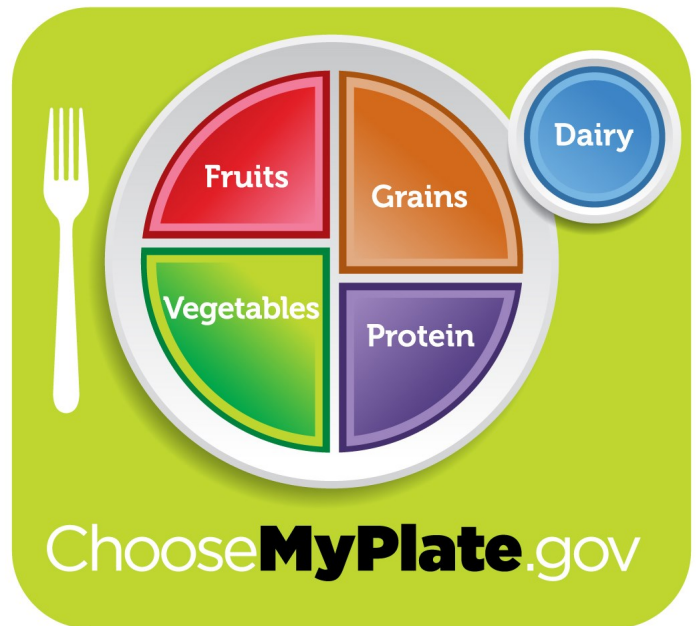
March is Nutrition Month

During March, one of the tools we can use to plan a healthy diet is ChooseMyPlate.gov. MyPlate is based on the recommendations of the 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans to help consumers make better food choices. MyPlate puts the five food groups into a place setting which helps to visualize healthy eating making it easier to build a healthy diet.

What can we learn from MyPlate?

- Avoid oversized portions. Before you eat, think about what and how much food is on your plate. Does it fit?
- Fill half your plate with fruits and vegetables. They are high in nutrients and low in calories.
- Less than one fourth of the plate should be lean meats or other proteins such as beans and nuts.
- Choose fat free or 1% dairy products to help control fat intake.
- Drinking water instead of sweetened beverages is healthiest.
- Make at least half your grains whole grains. Look for whole grain products such as whole wheat bread, pasta, or brown rice.
- Use the food label to compare sodium in foods like soup, bread, and frozen meals then choose the ones with less sodium.

For more information, including personalized MyPlate, meal plans, and recipes, check out www.choosemyplate.gov.



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Too Much Sodium is Bad for You

We all need to pay attention to the amount of sodium in our foods. High sodium consumption raises blood pressure, which puts us at risk for heart disease and stroke. Your risk of having high blood pressure increases with age. Fifty percent of people aged 55–74 and seventy-five percent of those aged 75 and older have high blood pressure.

We only need a small amount of sodium to keep our bodies working properly. For most Americans, the recommended limit is 1,500 mg of sodium per day. Most Americans get a lot more sodium than that. The average daily sodium intake for Americans is more than 3,400 milligrams. Most of the sodium in our diets comes from processed and restaurant foods.

What should we do to limit the sodium in our diets?

- Choose fresh, frozen (no sauce) or no salt added foods including fruits, vegetables, and meats.
- Limit sauces, mixes, and “instant” products, including flavored rice and pasta.
- Avoid adding salt when cooking and at the table. Try using herbs and spices instead.
- Read the nutrition facts information on the package of the foods we buy. Compare products to find lower sodium options.

For more information:

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) - <http://www.cdc.gov/salt/>

Choose MyPlate—www.choosemyplate.gov

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